Joh: Lich: & Couen

A PROPOSITION FOR The Safety & Happineſs of the King and Kingdom both in Church and State, and prevention of the Common Enemy.

Tendered to the Conſideration of his Majeſty and the Parliament againſt their next Seſſion.

By a lover of Sincerity & Peace.

The Intereſt of *England* lies in holding a firm Union in it ſelf, and the advancement of the *Proteſtant Religion*. For *England* is a mighty Animal, which can never die, except it kill it ſelf. *The Duke of* Roan *in his Treatiſe of the Intereſt of the Princes and States in Chriſtendom.*

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A PROPOSITION *for the ſafety and happineſs of the King and Kingdom.*

IT hath pleaſed Heaven to viſit us of late with his heavy and aſtoniſhing Judgments. The year before he ſwept away our Citizens from their houſes; The laſt year he ſwept away our houſes from the Inhabitants; And this year who knows what and who may be ſwept away by that diva-ſtation which accompanieth the Sword? If there be not a ſpark, as there is not a Sparrow, lights

on the *Houſe*, or the *Maſt* top without the Divine Will, methinks it will neither be unſeaſonable to lay his Providences to heart, nor unſuitable to make uſe of them, unto acts of mercy and commiſeration of others.

I am a perſon that am not very careful how I appear to you, and if it were a light matter I had to ſpeak about, you might turn away your ear from it, and regard me as little: But if it be a buſineſs of the greateſt conſequence (as I am perſwaded it is) that can be tendered at this preſent for a healing of the Nation, I hope you will both ſpare me a reaſonable hearing, and a candid interpretation.

There hath paſſed of late ſome Acts, whereby you have been very

ry ſevere againſt many innocent perſons that fear God, and do you no harm. I am loth to declare my reſentments in particular, unleſs I have further neceſſity: But I will purſue in the general thoſe ends I have in my purpoſe, which are the happineſs of our State, the peace of the Church, the ſafety of the King, and preſervation of the Nation, not in that way which hath been trodden hitherto in late proceedings, but in the paths of moderation, which ſome have not known, and ſome will not know, who have already perhaps impoſed too much, and would not (I hope) be impoſing more on us.

It ſhall be an Argument good enough for me from this late ca-

lamity on the City and upon our Ships, to alarm you to the quenching those Flames which we have helped to enkindle by the over-rigour of such Acts in the hearts of the Nation. God Almighty's righteous dealings towards us, may bring our *own* toward others into remembrance, and his severity teach us indulgence. It can neither be an unchristian or unwise admonition, when our Churches, with other buildings, are laid in heaps, to look after our Religion, & to prevent the ruine, which therein also doth threaten us, by beginning our repentance in those ashes.

I shall be clear and plain. I desire to be faithful to my Country, to my King, and to my God

I hope, though I know not how I ſhall approve my ſelf in the delivery. *In magnis, pejus eſt illud, non voluiſſe, quam quomodo facias, non intelligere.* We are at this time involved in Warrs abroad with our neighbours, and we are incompaſſed, as our Iſland is, with a Sea of inteſtine dangers amidſt our ſelves in the diviſions of our people. There is the ſubtilty of the *Jeſuite*, with thoſe many, too much to be feared advantages of that party; and there is on the other ſide, the wildneſs of the *Sectary*, with their multitudes, and high exaſperations. Both theſe are, as it were, the upper and nether jaw of deſtruction opening her mouth upon us: If we do not finde out a way to reconcile

the ſober *Proteſtant*, that we may have their combined ſtrength to oppoſe theſe extreams in caſe of inundation, I know not how ſoon theſe jaws may ſhut upon us, and overwhelm us in our confuſion.

The Motion therefore I have to make is for moderation in the buſineſs of Religion, firſt ſeriouſly debated, and then prudently concluded, in an Act of Accommodation between the *Conformiſt* and *Nonconformiſt* that are ſober in their principles, and Indulgence toward others who are ſo in their lives: So far I mean as ever it will ſtand with the Rules, both of Civil and Religious Prudence, and the good Order of the Land.

I am ſenſible of what a pauſe there

there will be on ſome mens ſpirits at this Motion. I am with *Caſar* at the flood of *Rubicon*, and the Dye is caſt.

I will confeſs ingenuouſly, I know not *how* it fares with others, but there is a company of people about us in the Country of different perſwaſions, who meet ſometimes many hundreds together, that our Juſtices have been in perplexity what to do. The moſt of them for ought I perceive are certainly inoffenſive perſons; and they have really no more againſt them than *Pliny* againſt the *Chriſtians* of old when he ſent to *Trajan* about them, that is, only that they meet, and preach, and pray together. And if that excellent Prince was aſhamed after this

report he gave him of them in his Epiſtle, to have theſe good men ſought out any more unto puniſhment, I cannot but favour thoſe inclinations, which are averſe from the like inquiſition. I profeſs to God it is ſuch an ungentleman-like thing methinks to trouble ones Neighbors, that I ſhould be glad to rid modeſt men of that work. It were better all theſe Acts ſuffered at once a dūe and Chriſtian Regulation, than we ſhould be ſtill put upon this untoward dragging innocent folks thus to priſon, for doing nothing in earneſt but endeavouring to ſave their ſouls. In the name of God take you your *Pſalter*, and let them ſay their prayers as they will.

I have made my Propoſition, I ſhall now offer you my Arguments. *Viſa eſt enim mihi* (with the forementioned Author) *res digna conſultatione, maximè propter periclitantium numerum; Multi enim omnis ætatis, omnis ordinis, utriuſque ſexus etiam vocantur in periculum, & vocabuntur. Neq; enim Civitates tantùm, ſed viros etiam atque agros ſuperſtitionis iſtius contagio pervagata eſt, quæ videtur ſiſti, & corrigi poſſe.*

My Arguments may be reduced to theſe heads. The courſe you have taken in your former Acts, will not reach the End you have deſigned in them. The way I propoſe in this Act is liker to do it. The preſent conſideration and exigency of affairs requires the

the ſame of us. One more, The preſent juncture of affairs, and conſcience toward our Brethren requires it. Theſe heads I will wrap together in my diſcourſe, and leave the Analyſis to your acuter Judgments.

If it were not a time to ſpeak now, we might lay our hands upon our lips, and our mouthes in the duſt. *I ſaid, Dayes ſhould ſpeak, and years teach wiſdom. But there is a ſpirit in man. Great men are not always wiſe, neither do the Aged alwayes underſtand Judgement.* I am ſorry to underſtand ſuch a reverend ſilence to have been on the ſpirits of both *Houſes* at the preſent prevailing Counſels of ſome great Perſons, which if I may ſpeak it with lowlineſs

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to them, as with zeal unto God and my Prince, are not good at this ſeaſon, nor will anſwer their entendments. I wonder really in whoſe Shops they have bought their Spectacles (not of *Menante* I believe or *Tacitus*) that they can ſee this great thing *Unity* (of folks ſpirits) in *Uniformity*, and the eſtabliſhment of old Foundations in new Impoſitions.

It is a principle of the ſerious tender Chriſtian, which he layes as a Rule to himſelf for practice, That he will not do any thing for fear, which he would not out of conſcience; And it is a deadly temptation againſt preſent Injunctions, that they have a penalty annexed to them. For beſides that the ſenſe of the unreaſonableneſs

ableneſs and cruelty of ſuch Acts are effectual wires upon the affections, There is a ſpirit in man, and reſolution of integrity, *Not to do evil that good may come of it*, as foreſtalls the mind with a ſteeling againſt it, inſtead of ſubmiſſion. If therefore in lieu of propoſing ſuch a piece of Baniſhment to fright the *Non-conformiſts* into the late Oath, enjoyned in the Act at *Oxford*, there had been offered a Liberty of the Miniſtry on that condition, without any penalty, the Act had been perhaps to purpoſe. Conſcience upon Conſcience would do ſomething, when Force upon Conſcience will do nothing.

Have we never read the Eccleſiaſtical Story, or heard at leaſt of

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the ten Perſecutions, how the Church grew in thoſe times, and what was the Seed of it? I will tell you a way that a Politick Prince took in ill doing, that you may take in doing better: The great *Julian*, that wiſe Apoſtate and curſed brave man, when he ſaw that all the cruelties of predeceſſors did but encreaſe the vigour and life of Chriſtianity, *The more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew, and they were grieved becauſe of the Children of Iſrael*; He took this courſe, he would not let any Chriſtian have Dignity or State-preferment, no not ſo much as to be one of his Souldiers, unleſs they came over to his Religion; they might have their liberty to

uſe

uſe their Conſciences to themſelves without perſecution, but they ſhould have none of his Favour or Countenance. By this means he did ſo ſtarve any brave attempt of Chriſtian Sufferings, and kept them ſo low and out of heart in their Profeſſion, that it is judged he made more waſte upon Chriſtianity in a few years, than all the Sword, Fire and Torments could before in two or three Ages. Lo here a line of Chalk, after which your Timber muſt be cut that goes to the building the Eccleſiaſtical State in this Nation. If there be any can cut it better by aim of his own head, I am miſtaken.

Vis Concilii expers, mole ruit ſua.

Vim

Vim temperatam, Dii provehunt ni majus.

There are but two wayes, resolve upon it. In the Kingdom of *Japan* I heard lately there was some Jesuites had crept in and planted the Christian Religion. Their King hearing this, sends a present *terrible* Persecution, whatsoever man is found *Christian*, they execute him presently: This not serving the turn, they do not execute the man only, but all the house where he was found to be harboured: This not rooting them quite out neither, the King commands that both that house and the next two houses on both sides of it, should be all put to execution: The terrible dread hereof seizing upon all, there is not a man

man can escape the discovery, and the Sect is immediately extirpate. Could your hearts now endure to do this? or could your hands serve you? Lay that right-hand on your breasts, weigh what I say; You must either come to this, if you see to the end, or you must come to an Accommodation.

And what are those things I pray, you would have of them, or destroy them? It is not the Dignity of the Bishops, their Lordships and Revenues; It is not their Cathedrals, Organs, and their Divine Service in what state and magnificence they please; It is not Common-Prayer, no not any Ceremony of the Church whatsoever for all its significancy

ry, if it be but a circumſtance of wor-
ex- ſhip and no more, that could hin-
ow der moſt of the judicious and ſo-
our ber *Non-conformiſts* to come over
ght- to you; but it is theſe Declara-
hat tions, Subſcriptions, and Oaths
e to which you impoſe on them in
you your Acts, as for which I will
oda- ſhew you they are one of the
worſt ways that could be deviſed
gs I to take or hold any. I will con-
em, vince you. There is nothing un-
the der the Sun makes ſuch a bruit
heir and ſtir in the hearts of People
It is as theſe Declarations and Oaths,
and when it is no leſs than the Con-
ſtat cience of a Lye, before the face
; I of God and men, in a caſe too of
no Confeſſion, and the fear of Per-
urc jury with it, that makes *them* leave
ncy their Livings and Miniſtry, rather
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than keep them on such conditions: and yet when all is done, be they taken or be they not taken, it signifies nothing. I will make this appear, And that not onely becauſe there is no hole whereout a man can creep that has taken a former Oath, but he can get out of the ſame, or find another like it, in any new Oath you put upon him: but becauſe there is nothing that is a man's duty, or unlawful, before he hath taken the Oath, but it remains as it was, after he hath taken it; and he will be obliged neither more nor leſs, (I ſpeak as to the thing not degree) whether he take it or not take it. Let a man be convinced in his conſcience that *Epiſcopacy* is Antichriſtian, and tha

It is much for the Glory of God, and his Duty, to extirpate it root and branch, let him take a thouſand Oaths, yet ſo long as he retains his Principles, and he accounts his Conſcience ſtands bound by a former Obligation, the latter Obligation can hold him nothing. What is the Covenant to an Epiſcopal judgment that hath taken it? and what will be the late new Oath to a contrary judgment? What, but a few new Withs on *Sampſon*'s hands, that brake like Tow, when the Philiſtine comes upon him?

Again, there is another thing upon this, that is a dreadful thing, and that is, When a man hath looſned the reins of his Conſcience a little too ſlack, in ſwallow-

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ing a forced Oath, there is no thing ſo like to imbitter his ſoul as this, againſt thoſe that impoſe it: Like a Lion in a chain, which not only holds no longer than he can break it, but Wo be to then he meets next, when it is broken.

A certain plain honeſt Neighbour of mine, coming to Church conſtantly as others did, it came to his turn to be choſen Churchwarden; He goes to the Court along with others; when he come there, they tender him the *Churchwardens Oath*; he knowing not well what to make of it, nor how to avoid it, takes it as the reſt do: But when he comes home, the Oath lies in his ſtomack, and he can finde no reſt until he leaves both his Churchwardenſhip, Church and

no- all, and goes to the *Anabaptists*,
ou and never since came there more.
ose Do not think those persons that
nich take this Oath, do love you or the
h he Oath ever the better for it. I will
nen appeal to the bosom of an honest-
ken hearted person, who stands at as
igh great an Elongation from the
urch hing *Hypocrite*, as the most of
cam men alive I am perswaded, what-
urch soever else he be, whether his be-
irt ing caught into that Oath once, as
om e was, makes him love the Co-
urch enant, the takers and imposers,
g n e dearer since, yea or nay? I
ho would to God there had never
t do Oath, besides the Assertory Oath,
Oa which is for the end of all strife,
n fi en known amongst men; for
th his counter-swearing, the Cove-
h a nt, and the new Oath, and the
a like,

like, doth make ſuch debauchery work amongſt honeſt minds, that we ſhall rue the time that ever they were born into the World.

It is not long ſince when many a worthy Gentleman of the Parliament have bitterly complained of the injury of that late Covenant and Engagements forced on them, who for their Conſcience ſake would hazard their Eſtate rather than take them: And how ſhall theſe conſciencious perſons then, as Chriſtians, be content to have oppoſit Oaths and Subſcriptions new coined in our Acts, and impoſed upon others? *Therefore art thou inexcuſable, O man, who doeſt the ſame things*, which thou haſt condemned? You may eaſily ſure to find *Daniel* a Tran-

greſſo

greſſour if the great Ones will contrive a Law on purpoſe; and that too in the matter of his *God*, when otherwiſe, there is nothing to be found but innocency in him.

Do ye forget, O ye Right Reverend! how the Oath of *Et cætera* made more wrinkles in the brows of men, than is in that character it ſelf? It coſt *Philip de Valois* dear, that he made our *Edward* the Third ſwear him fealty. Indeed an Oath in civil things that is taken with a good will, is of moment, but an Oath upon conſtraint we abhor. *Ruit humanum genus per Veſtitum.* To command a thing wherein before we were left free, is enough whet our humane nature un-

to oppoſition. To prohibit it, wil
make it coveted, and we can
have no deſires for that which is
eaſie of acceſs. If theſe few
ſheets which I write do get, and
may come with an *Imprimatur*
out of the Preſs, they will hard-
ly be read; but if they be ſeized
on as dangerous, they will be
ſought. If many of the ejected
Miniſters who are flockt to now
when they venture to preach
had liberty to ſay on, till they
had wearied themſelves and Au
ditors out, we ſhould ſee how
the rouling Snow-balls would
melt, and, excepting a few
the eminent of them, their Con
gregations quickly would
thin enough. If any of ou
Epiſcopal men would be follow
ed

wil ed, let them get thoſe looſe. It
can is true, we are indeed mad alrea-
h is dy in Schiſm and Faction, but it
few is this Reſtraint, like the fetters
and of Bedlam, makes us madder.
atur And alas Sirs! if there were
ard- only wilfulneſs in it, it were an-
ized other matter. But it is mens
l be Brains are infected; and after
ected that way you call Hereſie, they
now worſhip the God of their Fa-
each thers. Their judgments, their
they conſciences and hearts are con-
d Au vinced and engaged. I remem-
how ber in *Sfetigrade* a Town of *Epi-*
woul *rus*, in *Scanderbeg's* time, which
few was ſcituate ſtrongly on a rock,
r Co nd in which he placed much
ld b ruſt; when the *Turks* came into
of ou is Country and beſieged it, a
follow ertain Villain who had com-
ed

 pacted

pacted Treason, throws in a dead Dogg into the Common-Well, which one was all the City had. The Souldiers came in the morning for Water, and finde the Carrion; upon this sight there is not one of them will drink one drop: Their Captain comes and beseeches them; He takes of the Water and drinks first himself; but do all he could by threats and entreaties, nothing would serve, but through a *more* than *Jewish* Superstition, that it was polluted to *Christians*, the Town must be delivered up and all lost, rather than any of them can be got to do it. The remembrance of this Story makes me pitty the imagination of the *Sectary*, and reflect on my own

spiri

ſpirit. I do verily hope in the Lord, that there is nothing in theſe fears & dreadful abodings of many good mens hearts, about the Diſcipline and Way of Worſhip in our Church, but a Conceit. The Lord knows, I do not know, but this I am ſure, it is not theſe Laws and Penalties from without, have any tendency to the cure of them. Can you remember when you were Children, and had heard ſome tale of Sprights and Ghoſts overnight, and then waking about twelve, how you have lain ſweating with your fears at ſomthing you knew not what? There are certainly ſuch impreſſions of dread and ſuperſtition on many mens conſciences, no leſs ſtrong,

but more lasting and waking, that are as irresistable and hard to be helpt. And you may as well expect the most fearfull Child should go and abide in the dark by it self, as that such should do those things that are enjoyned, untill these imaginations get off. It is *Time* and *Liberty* and *Custome* must prevail with these, as the *Candle*, and *Day* and *growing to be men* will with the other.

It is the common opinion of our *Protestants* that the Pope is Antichrist and the Beast in the *Revelations*, whereof such terrible things are spoken. For my own part I know not that the Pope is that *Beast* any more than *Wat Tyler* or *Jack Cade* was; Ye

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when I ſee our Divines ſo ordinarily ſay and believe ſo, it hath begot in me ſuch apprehenſions, that I think I durſt not take upon me the profeſſion of Popery and the practice, which I muſt accordingly fancy to be the *mark* in the *forehead* and in the *right-hand*, in the Text, out of that fear only, if there were nothing to offend me in their tenents elſe, that it is poſſible it may be ſo. There are many ſerious men living and dead, that have joyned *Prelacy* and *Popery* together in the ſame rank, and if there be a dread upon the hearts of many that fear God in ſincerity, leſt this be Antichriſtian and the Beaſt, as well as that, and Conformity to each, the character of

either, who can help ſuch ſick thoughts? and how ſhall Acts and Puniſhments do any thing here, when the rankling of the wound is within and hid from any? unleſs you could tender them ſomething more dreadfull than that *fire and brimſtone in the preſence of the Lamb, wherein that man and woman ſhall be tormented for ever and ever, and have no reſt day nor night, who worſhip the Beaſt and his Image, and whoſoever receiveth the mark of his name,* you can do nothing at all this way. Lo here what you are to do if you go on thus.

I tell you, what perhaps you may have thought too mean for your notice; You will not by Violence under preſent circumſtances,

ſtances, bring People to Uniformity. The great thing that keeps theſe *Fanaticks* from the Church and Common-Prayer, lies in ſuch private odd impreſſions on their thick beliefs and dark minds. I tell it you, and it were well if none of the moſt ſerious and learned are not touched after a ſoberer faſhion, with the ſame malady. Find out a way now to root out ſuch principles, ſuch fearful conceits, and ſuperſtitious jealouſies of you; To meddle with their perſons is but to torment the body, not heal their conceptions. You muſt take another courſe than quite, that you may do this. For what is that, which can make theſe men with any appearance of

Truth, think our Governmen
Antichriſtian, unleſs it be th
perſecuting them by your Acts
which they lay all upon the *Pre*
late, and look upon it as the ſpi
rit of Antichriſt, and our Churc
as *Babylon*, oppoſing the Powe
of Religion? That you perſe
cute is Faction, and the factiou
ſpirit; but they take that Spir
to be the Power and Life o
Chriſtianity. The natural way
it follows; to convince them t
the contrary, is, a Ceſſation o
theſe Acts (that when there
no rage or perſecuting, the
may believe there is no Bea
nor Antichriſt;) a conjunctio
with the ſober of them (that the
may ſee you advance, and n
hate true Piety;) and overcon

ing the reſt in their weakneſs, with forbearance, long-ſuffering and gentleneſs.

There are none ignorant of one piece of advice that was given by an honourable Lawyer among the *Jews*, where the holy Apoſtles, thoſe Fiſhermen-Preachers diſturbed the World. *There was one* Theudus *roſe up and boaſted himſelf* (ſaith he) *and one* Judas, *and theſe came to nothing: wherefore I ſay to you, Refrain from theſe men, and let them alone; for if this counſel or work be of men, it will come to nought*, as others did: *but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it, leſt happily ye be found even to fight againſt God.* I wiſh to the Lord, the great Miniſters of our State would be

content to be no wiſer men than *Gamaliel:* If theſe Sects and Sectaries in their *union* againſt Prelacy, how contemptible ſoever in their *diſperſion,* are indeed of God, or a Counſel of his, then ſhall not Prelacy ſtand before them: But if they be all nothing but the imaginations of divided mortals, without the power of Religion as their center, Then *refrain from theſe men, and let them alone,* (according to the advice of that time) and you ſhall ſee how much more eaſily they will break all to pieces of themſelves, than by your keeping a ſtir with them.

Let me offer you one preſident to your conviction. When *Veſpatian* and *Titus* came to the laſt

laſt Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, there was three factions of the Seditious, called the *Zealous*; the one held the City, the other two divided the Temple. At the Roman Army drawing up before the Walls, all theſe factions agree unanimouſly, & withſtood them with equal courage and bravery. The General hereupon takes this advice, he withdraws his Army from their Territories for a ſeaſon, leaving them to themſelves purpoſely; They preſently upon his removal, fall together into their former *diſcords*, till they had almoſt waſted and ruin'd one another; and then comes he with his Army back, and after a cruel ſiege, takes the City. There are more than three

Factions

Factions among us, who are zealously united againſt Prelacy; If you could find a way to divide them and break them, you muſt withdraw theſe Acts againſt them. It is your Laws combine their intereſt, that otherwiſe was divided. A ſtrange piece of Policy that propoſes ſafety to Epiſcopacy in the union of the Adverſary, and Peace to the Nation in their higheſt exaſperations.

A little before Arch-Biſhop *Lauds* time the *Puritans* had got a faſhion of wearing their hair ſo ſhort, as above their ears. They placed matter of Conſcience in it, and there was few but were careful obſervers of it. It pleaſed God that Dr. *Laud* took a humour to approve ſhort hair

for

for the Miniſtry, which he requiring more than ordinary ſtrictly as Canonical, This preſently has a contrary effect on our zealous Brethren, who plead for their liberty by their practice, and none of late were ſeen to wear their hair more long than thoſe who were for a Gathered-People. If I know any thing of the ſpirits of men, it is Rarity and Difficulty that whets the appetite, and it is Satiety and Liberty aſſwageth them. And if ſome ſuch way as this, could it be hit upon did not prevail more toward Uniformity, than the flat ſeverity of direct Injunctions for it, I will ſhut up my Table-Books, and take no more reckoning of Experience.

It may be there are ſome pleaſe-

them-

themſelves in the thought, that the new *Oxford* Oath hath divided the *Non-conformiſts*, ſeeing part of them do take it, and part do not. But what is the diviſion of men, into ſome taking the Oath, and ſome not taking it any more than ſome of them *Presbyterians*, ſome *Anabaptiſts* ſo long as they retain the ſame heart and principles as to their common concerns? While their *combined* Intereſt is all one, the dividing them in their *ſingle* Intereſts, and little angers, is but multiplying parties againſt you and playing with their diſturbance.

I know ſome Politicks may direct you, that when there is a growing Party or Faction unde

ny State, to keep a ſevere hand
ver them for their ſuppreſſion:
ut this muſt be underſtood be-
re thoſe parties be grown, and
ou be ſure that they are the
ſſer number. If ſuch Factions
e conſiderable and equall, a
eutral kind of unconcernment
d indifferency, makes the chief
agiſtrate *ſtrong*, while he keeps
s intereſt in *all* of them; where-
an eſpouſing of one, doth
th bandy the others againſt it,
d makes his Horſes to be but
eir Horſes, and his Chariots
eir Chariots. It is not a few
conſiderable Miniſters onely,
e engagement of whoſe ſouls
e againſt theſe late Acts, but
re are many worthy Gentle-
n, and grave Citizens, and
ſober

ſober Perſons, beſides the mul
titude of multitudes of ſuch tha
are mixt with the Sectaries.
wiſh heartily that our Sovereig
Lord the King could but mak
one equal tryal of the gener
inclination : Suppoſe he ſhou
give Commiſſion to the Sheri
of any County pitched upon i
differently, granting leave to th
people promiſcuouſly to me
together, and give their Vot
freely, whether they would ha
an Indulgence and Liberty
Conſcience or no? Let us ha
but fair play for it, and if we
not carry it in the Hearts a
Votes of the good Subject, w
will neither *move the wing*, n
open the mouth, nor *peep* more
this buſineſs.

It hath pleaſed God at this
eaſon to bring us into that con-
ition, that an Agreement of all
erſons, to the ſtrengthening of
ur hearts and our hands for his
ajeſty, would be ſeaſonable.
nd were I asked, what means
ere moſt likely to do this? I
o think verily there is nothing
nder the cope of Heaven com-
arable to ſuch a paſſing a really
ee and ingenuous Act of Grace
r *Indulgeance in matters of Re-*
gion; The King would ſee, and
e Nation would feel another
pirit running in their Blood,
nd what a difference there is
etween a Man whoſe heart is
old at the thoughts that when
e hath fought for his King, and
eaten his Enemies, he muſt
come

come home (as it were) again to his bonds; and of his, whose spirit is flush with assurance that after Victory abroad, he shall return to the enjoyment of that thing that is dearer to him than his Life, *the Liberty of his Conscience.*

O Sirs! Is there never a drop of *English Blood* in the Veins of the *Sectary?* How shall that thing you call *Obstinacy* and *Faction*, when they suffer the violence of your Laws, and are unmoved, appear to be the most undaunted Courage of the English Spirit, when it shall shew it self in the Field? Are there no sober men amongst all the *Malecontents*, whose advice, assistance and prayers would do you no harm,

harm, to take them with you? It was not the *Cauſe*, but the *Party*, and this thing, *Liberty of Conſcience*, that got the better of the King in our late Inſurrections. It was *Liberty of Conſcience* got into the Houſe, and pull'd down the Biſhops; that went with the Parliaments Army and won all. It was Liberty of Conſcience came back and pull'd up the Parliament, and then ſate down and reign'd with *Cromwel*. It is this piece of ſingle policy, the raiſing up ſuch a Principle in baſe and mean fellows, to mate the Bravery and Spirit of the Gentry, ſhall eternallize that Mortal. It was Liberty of Conſcience, when our Religion was at ſtake in thoſe Confuſions, that

tack't

tack't about and reſtored the
King. And if his Majeſty will
hearken to the counſel of a *mean*
perſon, rather than to the perſon
of *mean counſel*, let him keep
this wild thing, *Liberty of Conſci*
ence, on his ſide. This Liberty
of Conſcience, let me ſay again
is that mad Earl of *Warwick* in
the time of *Edward* the fourth
and *Henry* the ſixt, call'd *Make*
King, that the gain or loſs o
him on either ſide, was the gain
or loſs of the *Kingdom* with him

It may be there is ſome grea
Prelate or eminent Stateſman a
the Helm are too hard for you
inclinations, which ſteer & by
them unſeen, into other Cour
ſels; I will therefore humble
argue with them. Behold I wi

be

the be to them in your ſtead; *I am* wil *framed alſo out of the clay. Let me* hea *not, I pray you, accept any mans* ſon *perſon, neither let me give flatter-* lee *ing titles unto Man: for I know* nſci *not to give flattering titles, in ſo* ert *doing my Maker might ſoon take* gai *me away.* Ye have ſaid, We are *k* i he men, we have found out wiſ- urt om. I will reprove them, *Great* *lak en are not alwayes wiſe.*

ſs o Was it, in the firſt place, con- gai ulted wiſely, when we reſtored him piſcopacy in this Nation, to re- gre eive a company of men as low an a their intereſts as in their con- you tion, unto ſuch vaſt Emolu- by ents which never were, and are Cou ver like to be again, being mb e fruits of twenty years toge- I wi er in one, unto which (excep-

be ting

ting a very few of them) they
had no relation in the Earth to
challenge the leaſt penny before
actual poſſeſſion? How well
might ſuch perſons have been
contented to have entered the
preſent Revenews & Honours
and left the Arrears for publick
accounts, or good works? This
poſſibly was not wiſe (Sirs), not
only for the improvidence, but
for that envy and juſt kind of
diſdain, that ſo exceſſive Riches
(thrown upon men ſo undeſer-
vedly) hath raiſed in the ſto-
macks of others (to the Funct-
on it ſelf for the Covetouſneſs of
the Perſons) eſpecially of thoſe
whoſe high merits for the King
and his Cauſe did require ſome
other gratification, than a lan-
guiſhin

guiſhing looking-on, and repi-ing at their fortunes. *Great men are not alwayes wiſe.*

Was it, in the next place, wiſe-y conſulted (wherein yet, above ll, you would ſeem moſt wiſe) n making ſuch a ſtir with the Covenant, as hath been done in ur late Impoſitions? It was the Viſdom of the Antient Church, ſtead of contention about the *Jewiſh* Ceremonies, to take a pecial care that they might have n honourable burial, and there-y have they bin all huſht with-ut trouble for many Ages. Me-inks, if the wiſdom of theſe reat and wiſe men, were not iſer than the ancient Wiſdom, ey might, at leaſt for his Maje-ies ſake, have dealt according-

ly with the Covenant. The
might have laid it in a ſtate
ſilence, without light, and with
out words, evermore to be fo
gotten, and never would it hav
done them further hurt. B
now have they raiſed it twice
thrice up (in a former Subſcri
tion & the late Oath) as a drea
ful Ghoſt out of his Grave, to
what miſchief, or raiſe wh
troubles for the future I cann
tell, but to little end at preſe
for ought I ſee, only to terri
mens Conſciences, and keep
live the memory of it, whi
were fitter to die, & be thoug
on no more. *Great men are*
alwayes wiſe.

Once more: There was a ti
when theſe wiſe and great m
mig

might have compounded for *Episcopacy* with the pious and learned of her Adverſaries, upon as high advantage and a ſure foundation, for themſelves and the peace of the Nation, as could be well wiſhed or deſired in any ſeaſon; But they outſtood their market, and ſlipt the opportunity. *Great men are not alwayes wiſe.*

They have ſlipt it, yet may we redeem one lock of it; to wit, it is better the Parliament compounded them, than that a forreign Enemy, or the *Papiſts* ſhould do it. We know when it was our *Ridley* & *Hooper* were agreed. I draw up this: If the greateſt *Seers* may fail in their politicks and erre in Viſion, in

ly with the Covenant. They might have laid it in a ſtate of ſilence, without light, and without words, evermore to be forgotten, and never would it have done them further hurt. But now have they raiſed it twice or thrice up (in a former Subſcription & the late Oath) as a dreadful Ghoſt out of his Grave, to do what miſchief, or raiſe what troubles for the future I cannot tell, but to little end at preſent for ought I ſee, only to terrifie mens Conſciences, and keep alive the memory of it, which were fitter to die, & be thought on no more. *Great men are not alwayes wiſe.*

Once more: There was a time when theſe wiſe and great men might

might have compounded for *Epiſcopacy* with the pious and learned of her Adverſaries, upon as high advantage and a ſure foundation, for themſelves and the peace of the Nation, as could be well wiſhed or deſired in any reaſon; But they outſtood their market, and ſlipt the opportunity. *Great men are not alwayes wiſe.*

They have ſlipt it, yet may we redeem one lock of it; to wit, It is better the Parliament compounded them, than that a foreign Enemy, or the *Papiſts* ſhould do it. We know when it was our *Ridley* & *Hooper* were agreed. I draw up this: If the greateſt *Seers* may fail in their Politicks and erre in Viſion, in

ſome things, when there is no man doubts of their integrity otherwiſe than of their ability, why may they not poſſibly have been out here, in their adviſing us to theſe Acts about Religion?

Come then, and let us ſet the Sun and Wind to ſtrive again for maſtery. You ſee what the cold boyſterous blaſts of theſe late Acts have done on the Travellour, that they have made the moſt but hold their Cloaks the faſter about them. Now let us have ſome gentle rayes and warm beams from his gracious Majeſty and his loving Parliament, in an Act of Indulgence and Concord that ſhal pleaſe his People, and you ſhall ſee them all

all, not only to throw down their Cloaks and Eſtates, but their Hearts and Lives at his feet, ſaying with *Amaſa* in holy Story, *Thine are we, O David, and on thy ſide, thou Son of Jeſſe; Peace, peace be unto him, and peace to thoſe that help him.*

I will here turn, and look back on the way I have come. You have my Motion and my Arguments under the three firſt *heads* mainly, at firſt named; I muſt explain my ſelf a little upon the *Motion*, and offer the other. *Namquid facimus, id niſi utile ſit, ſtultæ omnis atque inanis inde eſt gloria.*

To eke out then this Propoſition. I will take *breath*, and not be *afraid to ſhew you alſo my*

Opinion. There are the learned and ſober Godly amongſt us, which are to be compounded with as your Brethren: And there are the Zealous and Giddy in leſſer Fractions, which are to be born withal in mercy, & won over with patience & gentleneſs.

For the former. There was a Declaration of his Majeſties about theſe Eccleſiaſtical Affairs before *black Bartholomew*, wherein a compoſition is drawn up to our hands, well and wiſely: and there are Laws in our Statute-Books againſt *Pluralities*. If that Declaration were paſſed into a Law, with as little canvaſing and alteration as may be, though with no leſs than is neceſſary to calm the withholding party, we need

need no more to do our buſi-neſs. And if thoſe Statutes were refreſht into a new Act, that no mortal breathing ſhould hold more than one Living and one Dignity; that is, one Cure of Souls(upon which alſo he ſhould ordinarily be reſident) with one Canonſhip, Prebend, or the like, which is a *ſine-Cure* (as a reward of ſpecial merit or favour): then ſhould you not onely do God right, and render the *Hire* to the *Labourer*, which cryes for juſtice, but you would make an Act of Grace or Accommodation ſignificant, while you put the means into his Majeſties hands to gratifie his *Reſtored*, and make him bountiful with their leavings. I know who will be ready to *ſtamp*

here, and fling dirt in the Air. This is a kind of Clergy-Treason. But it is no matter, I will leave it upon Record for his Majesties service, that if there be occasion or exigence for it, what is prepared may be used.

For the latter. Let us suppose a Liberty granted to these persons for their Assemblings according to their Consciences, provided by Law, that for security to the State, and upon account of that Rule, *Not a Novice*, (which modesty should teach those who are without learning, to hold themselves to be so much longer than others) *lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the Devil*, they do not permit any to

to be their Paſtors, or to ſpeak in their Churches, but ſuch as are of gravity and years as is fitting; and that, leſt they ſhould meddle about State-matters, their Meeting-places (as they would have them) ſhould be open for any that will to hear them, and implead them if guilty; I humbly conceive, without any policy more, that when the preſent Zeal of this Generation had beat it ſelf out a little ſeaſon, and there be none of the heat of the Young man (which runs out in theſe perſons unto the itch of preaching, as it doth unto *amores* and the like in others) to keep alive the ſtrange fire, which ſpeaking againſt Government finally enkindles: Before theſe

men that are ſo hot upon it unto four or five & twenty ſhall come to have fourty years hairs upon their beards (or thirty five, if they will be content at leaſt but to ſtay ſo long) they will get, it is likely that diſcretion to ſee how contemptible is their ſtuffe in compariſon of the grave ſtudied Miniſter; and being cold moreover to applauſes by that time, They willbe ſo aſhamed and flat to ſuch an inſolence, that as ſoon as ever a few of thoſe that are now living ſhall give up their Churches and Ghoſts together, there ſhall not hardly in a little time be any found more to ſucceed them.

I heard, to ſtrengthen this, it fared ſo with one of their Churches

ches of great resort in *London*, that was a fierce Revelation-mans, one Mr. *Strange*, who being taken away by the Mortality, they having not his Peer left to take his Bishoprick, dissolved immediately, and their place knew them no more: Had that person, as he was often sought, chanced to have been taken, and put up in *Newgate*, it is like they would have been provided of a *Substitute*. It is not therefore your haling these men and women to Goal that will disperse them; for when you have them in Prison, they will Conventicle there, and the rest be at the next Meeting: but if you *refrain from these men*, and let them alone, (as that grave Gentlemen

tleman before in Scripture advised) till a few of the more stanch and considerable do die, they will come to dissolution of their own accord.

One thing yet I will tell you further, which *you* perhaps think not of. Suppose this Freedom in the Worship and Service of God according to mens inelinations: Those that are for the *Congregational way* shal draw the most considerate and moderate from the *Sectary*; and those that are the *Presbyterian Preachers* shall drain the *Gathered Congregations*; And then the most eminent and judicious of the *Presbyterian* coming over to the *Liturgy* upon a little condescention to them in a few of their

ad- most material exceptions, This
nore thing, *Liberty of Prophecy*, which
die, you ſo mortally dread, as the
on of enemy of Conformity, ſhall hap-
pily become one of the moſt po-
you litick, apt, and kindlieſt means,
hink that can be thought upon at this
dom ſeaſon to bring up the people to
e of it.

ina- There is a block after this,
the which I foreſee will be laid in
the the way, and pretended to ener-
rate vate this diſcourſe. It cannot
hat ſtand with ingenuity for any that
bers plead in general for Indulgence
gre- in regard of their own Conſci-
moſt ences to put in any barr againſt
the others that are conſciencious;
the and conſequently the door here-
en- by will be opened for the *Papiſt*
heir to under-ſet and over-run the
oſt

Pra-

Proteſtant Religion. But this is a Cloud that need not be feared by a Wind that blows ſo oppoſite to it. For beſides that the Act moved for, is an Act for Concord and Indulgence in the Reformed Cauſes, and this *Liberty of Conſcience* muſt neceſſarily include that of the *Magiſtrate*, aſwel as the *Subject*, which cannot allow of Idolatry, or any thing of that nature by Publick Sanction, when it may condeſcend much in matters of indifferency: The thing we know is to paſs the debate and deliberation of both Houſes, who will provide well enough beyond doubt in that matter. Neither am I much moved if you ſay, that the Arguments I uſe for the

Non-

Non-conformists may be applied to the *Papists*; for though some of them indeed may, many of them may not, nor the main heads of them. These are not like to be reduced this way. The *interest of State* consists not with the *Jesuite*, as the King's *Supremacy* does not with the *Pope*. Otherwise, were there no more danger to mens souls and lives in *prevailing Popery* than in *Presbytery* or the *Sectary*, I am not the man that could find in my heart to persecute any harmless peaceable person, for doing his devotions another way than I do.

I know there will be this, and twenty things perhaps more said to traduce and choak this Motion:

tion : But I oppose the same buckler, to wit, The Motion as it was at first stated, and the Debate of Parliament. There is no Act of Grace can pass the two Houses, but it will prevent the inconveniences, and answer for it self against Exceptions. A legall stated Toleration will not undermine, but uphold Religion; and be no friend, either of Superstition or Confusion.

To return from this pursuit. It hath been I see the policy of late transactions, to endeavour to root out those *Principles* from mens minds whereby they have maintained the lawfulness of former Sedition and Rebellion, and hereupon hath the renunciation of the Covenant been so pressed

in

in our Oaths and Subſcriptions: But if the Policy of thoſe firſt Wheels that move others, had bin rather to root out the *Cauſes* from us, which make men willing to entertain ſuch Principles, I do humbly ſuppoſe that Policy to have been the deeper. The way to eſtabliſh the Kings *Throne* in the *hearts* of his People, and to do it for ever, is this; to make it appear that all that Good (to wit, *ſubſtantial Good*) which they ever expected (or can expect) from a change of the Government, or a Commonwealth, may be had from Him (or from a Prince) in the Acts of his Parliament. This ſaying I will leave upon file as digeſted; and I will adde ſomething (though more rawly)

rawly) hereunto ; that thoſe Good things mainly which ſecretly have been and lie on the hearts of the Commons, may be reduced to theſe: An Enfranchiſment of Servile Tenures. A commutation of *Tythes* (ſuppoſe by a Law enjoyning every man to buy out his own, and the money be laid out in *Glebe*.) A Regiſter of Eſtates. A Tenderneſs towards mens Conſciences in matters of Religion.

Where there are no hopes from Inovation, no body wil go about to make it. But when a People have all can be had, all that can come to a ſettlement with Judgment and Righteouſneſs by the preſent Government already then will there be no hopes from

Ino

novation. *Ergo*, When thoſe
nings are taken into conſidera-
on by the Parliament (or Par-
aments) and after mature de-
ate and conſultation, come to
e concluded upon ingenuouſly
nd ſincerely, wiſely and righte-
uſly, which have been on the
earts, and in the deſign of the
ore publick-ſpirited in theſe
te times rudely and wildly:
hen ſhall our Government of
Monarchy in this Land (leaving
he perſons of our ſucceſſive So-
ereigns unto Providence and
heir chances) be out of danger
or future Generations.

I deſcend to what remains,
hat is the laſt head unto which
reduced my Arguments.

Hitherto then I have ſpoken

to

to you as Men, I will ſpeak to you now as Chriſtians and Belie-vers of the World to come; and if I differ ſomething in my ſtile upon that account, I hope you will bear with it. O you Go-vernours and Rulers, let me ad-dreſs you as fellow-mortal-men, who muſt appear before the great Tribunal one day to give an account of your Stewardſhips unto *Jeſus Chriſt* your Prince and Lord, as my ſelf muſt, who am not able ever to ſtand there but by infinite exceeding mercy in the bloud of the Lamb, who was ſlain for the remiſſion of our ſins. I know not any kinder of-fice can be done you than this in all humility to adviſe you to let none prevent you, but be

your

your ſelves the Authors of that Grace and Benignity which is ſo abſolutely neceſſary to the Nation.

It will make the dignity of your high places, and the face of your lives paſt look more chearfull to you, when Death ſhall bring his Leaden Mace to exchange with your Golden-titles, if you ſhal have the Teſtimony of your Conſciences, that you have been content to deny your ſelves in this thing, and diſpleaſe ſome men for the ſake of our Lord, who was ſo merifull and good to every body, hat he exerciſed Indulgence all is life long, and then died that e might obtain more, for you, nd me, and ſuch as could not

receive

receive any of him while he wa
here.

There is a Perſon I hope yo
would do a kindneſs for with a
your heart, and you have rea
ſon, it is for your *dear Lord* tha
bought you, and there is no
thing in the World you can d
I am perſwaded that he wil tak
ſo kindly from you at this time
as to be pittiful to his Servant
who are diſtreſſed about you
Acts in point of Conſcience
and who the more deſpiſed the
are and like unto their Lor
the fitter ſubjects they are fo
your compaſſion. Neither w
it hurt you in another piece
tenderneſs towards the Peopl
to prevent Inſurrection, and to
tifie againſt Invaſion; ſecuri
heret

hereby both the Bad from puniſhment, and the Good from danger.

It were better certainly for any one mans own part, that there never had been Biſhops, than that he ſhould be one condemned hereafter for taking that courſe in eſtabliſhing of them, as thereby to have ſinned without repentance, againſt the ſouls of many whom *Jeſus Chriſt* is not aſhamed to call his Brethren, and ſo againſt him, who ſhall be our Judge, and will take whatſoever we do unto them, as if we did it unto Himſelf. If you had no need of mercy from God, it were tolerable then for you to be extream towards others. But if you are ready to indulge

indulge your ſelves too often in
many things that are not allow-
ed by him, when permitted by
you: methinks the way to en-
gage the Lord unto pardon
ſhould be in bearing with them
in theſe things which are diſal-
lowed only by you, and permit-
ted by him. If you forgive not
your Brethren their treſpaſſes
neither will your heavenly Fa-
ther forgive you your treſpaſſes
He ſhall have judgement without
mercy, that hath ſhewed no mercy

Do you know that many of
theſe things which are impoſed
are really againſt mens Conſci-
ences, and would you indeed
have any ſuch *to do* them though
they be ſo? Do you conſider
this, and what it is? If it be

bette

better to be drown'd in the Sea with a Milſtone, than to offend *one* of God's little ones, what is it to offend *multitudes*, that is, ſo offend them as to inforce them to ſin againſt their Conſciences, which is to wound them and to ruine them? Why Sirs! if one of theſe men on the ſudden, to avoid the penalty, ſhall do what is enjoyned unſatisfiedly, his ſoul when he reflects on it is ſmitten, and he can hardly again ever recover it perhaps all his life. I profeſs to you, it is better in this caſe really you had taken a Poniard and ſtabb'd him to the heart, it had been leſs pain, and the ſtroke of leſſe deadly conſequence to him. *If you ſin againſt the Brethren, and wound their weak*

receive any of him while he wa
here.

There is a Perſon I hope yo
would do a kindneſs for with a
your heart, and you have rea
ſon, it is for your *dear Lord* tha
bought you, and there is no
thing in the World you can d
I am perſwaded that he wil tak
ſo kindly from you at this time
as to be pittiful to his Servant
who are diſtreſſed about you
Acts in point of Conſcience
and who the more deſpiſed the
are and like unto their Lord
the fitter ſubjects they are fo
your compaſſion. Neither wi
it hurt you in another piece
tenderneſs towards the Peopl
to prevent Inſurrection, and to
tifie againſt Invaſion; ſecuri
here

hereby both the Bad from punishment, and the Good from danger.

It were better certainly for any one mans own part, that there never had been Bishops, than that he should be one condemned hereafter for taking that course in establishing of them, as thereby to have sinned without repentance, against the souls of many whom *Jesus Christ* is not ashamed to call his Brethren, and so against him, who shall be our Judge, and will take whatsoever we do unto them, as if we did it unto Himself. If you had no need of mercy from God, it were tolerable then for you to be extream towards others. But if you are ready to

indulge

indulge your ſelves too often in many things that are not allowed by him, when permitted by you: methinks the way to engage the Lord unto pardon ſhould be in bearing with them in theſe things which are diſallowed only by you, and permitted by him. If you forgive not your Brethren their treſpaſſes neither will your heavenly Father forgive you your treſpaſſes *He ſhall have judgement without mercy, that hath ſhewed no mercy*

Do you know that many of theſe things which are impoſed are really againſt mens Conſciences, and would you indeed have any ſuch *to do* them though they be ſo? Do you conſider this, and what it is? If it be

better

better to be drown'd in the Sea with a Milſtone, than to offend *one* of God's little ones, what is it to offend *multitudes*, that is, ſo offend them as to inforce them to ſin againſt their Conſciences, which is to wound them and to ruine them? Why Sirs! if one of theſe men on the ſudden, to avoid the penalty, ſhall do what is enjoyned unſatisfiedly, his ſoul when he reflects on it is ſmitten, and he can hardly again ever recover it perhaps all his life. I profeſs to you, it is better in this caſe really you had taken a Poniard and ſtabb'd him to the heart, it had been leſs pain, and the ſtroke of leſſe deadly conſequence to him. *If you ſin againſt the Brethren, and wound their weak*

Conſciences, you ſin againſt Chriſt.
Do you believe the Goſpel, or
that there is ſuch a thing as ſin?
what then is ſtealing, and drink-
ing, and lying with women, if
ſuch damnable untenderneſs as
this is, be nothing? Is it a ſin to
kill a man, and no ſin to damn
him everlaſtingly? On my con-
ſcience, you would be grieved
all your life if *you* had murdered
any man; and ſhall *you* really be
the occaſion of murdering the
ſouls of many, and not once con-
ſider *what have we done?* I hope
and am perſwaded that many of
theſe things at which ſome good
men are ſtumbled, are nothing
yet to him that eſteemeth any thing
to be unclean, it is unclean. And
what if upon a mans yeelding to
on

one thing that is againſt his conſcience, being put upon diſtreſs, he ſhall make ſhipwrack of his preſent Faith, & departing from it now, never be regardful of it more, & ſo become irretragably damn'd? Is there no pitty and turning of your bowels at the thought to have ſuch a one crying out eternally upon you, that if it had not been for your Acts, he had never come into that place of torments?

Give me leave then, for anticipation of this cry and guilt, in the behalf of many, of thouſands, of many thouſands of innocent people, men and women in the Land, to beg *Quarter* of you for their Conſciences. They are *not* able to *yeeld* to the things

you impoſe upon them. *Though they be lanfull or indifferent in themſelves, yet ſo long as they are againſt their conſciences, He that eateth and doubteth, is damned if he eat. O do not force their ſouls upon damnation.* You may be perhaps of a ſtrong Minde and hardy Conſcience, and others weakneſs and fear of Sin may be but a *Romance* to you. We might inſtance in ſome, who little thought at the Kings Return, of their after-experience, that they ſhould fall down ſlain at Conformity, who might expect ſome other fruit from thence, & were not able to reap it. I profeſs to you, the moſt, I believe, are not capable indeed to judge in this matter. You have not been

wounded

wounded *or* lain under those terrors, to know what Tenderness in this kind is; yet have *you* sinned against the Lord Almighty, as well as others, and have need of his indulgence.

It was the determination of *Mirandula*, that no man can make himself believe what he will. It is not consequently the severity of Laws that can do any thing with the Mind, though it may with the Outward-man. Force may make men Hypocrites, not Converts to a Faith which is enjoyned. Neither is the penalty indeed of our Acts, as it relates to the Minister who conforms not to them (which lies mainly in the deprivation of their Ministry and their serviceableness to God

in their place) ſuch, as is fit to have been promoted on ſome of them, or like to have effect on others.

I know not how well thoſe may like of themſelves in their *Sacerdotal Function*, who can be a Biſhop here, and a Dignitary there; a Dean in one Church, a Canon in another, a Prebendary in a third; the Rector of ſuch a Pariſh, and Parſon of ſuch; who can ſhovel-up their Preferments together in heaps, as if the Cure of Souls were indeed nothing elſe but the Care of Money, or the raiſing of their Families: But as for thoſe men that expect none of theſe things, but are intent on their work, their buſineſs & account, which makes them

them groan under the weight, I cannot conceive any temptation ſo ſhrewdly grateful to fleſh and blood as what you have been offering them by your Acts. And will you indeed conſpire with Satan, and with the fleſh of ſinful men, to rob the people, who are innocent and have not offended, of that ſerious, faithful, painful Preaching of many of theſe Men, for want of which you know not how many of their ſouls may periſh, and how much ſin may abound, the guilt whereof may be laid to your charge; and in the mean while only pleaſure theſe whom ye account the Offenders themſelvs ſo extream highly, as to ſet them at perfect eaſe; free them from their care

and ſtudy, and give them the moſt voluptuous enjoyment of perpetual leaſure? A very little whereof, without our Acts, their buſie Conſciences would perhaps let them have.

They may thank you. But I will tell you a better courſe to puniſh a good Preacher for his Nonconformity than to pleaſure the fleſh, & diſcharge him for it. Onely I muſt plead with you a little from the Argument I am upon (that is, *Conſcience*) in the way. Have there not been ſome, nay many of thoſe Miniſters, whom you have ejected by your Acts, ſerious Perſons, faithfull Labourers, and worthy of the Vineyard? And why have you impoſed ſuch conditions to the en-

entrance, or continuance of their Miniſtry, as they cannot yeeld unto without going againſt their Conſciences? Can you ſay that in theſe conditions you have really condeſcended to them as far as poſſibly you could without ſinning againſt yours? And that you have done moreover all that you are able for their Reſtitution? Why then is your Peace with theſe men laid upon the approbation & uſe of thoſe things which in their nature are diſputable and unneceſſary? The Church is a company of perſons profeſſing the belief and practiſe of thoſe things which *Chriſt* hath appointed to Salvation, & when no more can indeed be required unto union than a joyning in the

owning and practising all things that are such, why is there any thing that is not necessary to Eternal life made the condition to a man (after trial of his sufficiency and allowance by Orders) of performing his Ministry, any more than of his Communion with the Congregation?

Let a man then, once ordained, any way, be still held, and retained for a Labourer in the Harvest. Let not the Master be offended who hath imployed him, nor his Talent be wrapped up: But let him be made a *Gibeonite* to the sons of the Church, that they may use him as an Assistant for their burden, while Institution and Induction is conferred only according to Law.

This

This will satisfie the *sincere Nonconformist*, who will obtain hereby his main end, *the glorifying God in his Calling*: and this is the best way to fetch in others, who certainly will grow weary at the long-run, when they shall have Work provided them as Ministers, but no Benefice until they conform.

When the *Persians* had made a Bridge over the *Hellespont*, and the *Grecian* Commanders were consulting to break it down, it was *Themestocles*'s advice, by all means to let it stand; which when he perceived they were not like to entertain, he sends privately word to the Enemy, what they were consulting to do: They fearing thereupon left they

they ſhould be prevented, march back ſuddenly in thoſe numbers which (if they had not had the means of returning) muſt have ſwallowed up the whole Country. The Counſel of this *Athenian* ſhall be a Preſident to me in what I have been offering at this ſeaſon. There was a Bridge at his Majeſties return, in a treaty between the Biſhops and their fellow-endeavourers of his happie Reſtauration, that was on building; a Bridge, not for any to depart Enemies from us, but for thoſe who are Brethren (of the ſame Religion, differing only in ſome circumſtances) to come over to You into Union and Concord with You. I know not by whoſe advice it was bro-

ken

ken down; It may be, really, not by his Majesties any more than by mine, who do study thus (if possible) to set it afoot, and would be content to have it rebuilt any way, rather than not at all. Let me hear that gracious word, *Thus saith* Cyrus, *Arise and Build*; and when 'tis builded I would have that Motto on it, as my Lo. *Bacon* hath on his House (now the worthy Master of the Roll's) of *Goram*, being a modest but fair structure, In the front of it there is this written, *Mediocria firma.*

If the Bishops will not, yet may they at least hear a little of his Majesties, or the Nation's mind about it; That they may write down in the Book of what here-

hereafter shall befall them, *Moniti meliora.*

There are, I perceive, many fears and hopes upon the minds of people, and the presages of their hearts are many. I do not know whether there be any *dark Notices* from some Spirits that preside over us, of some great Events sometimes when they are near us: But methinks the minds of some have of late aboded us some very great Evil, or great Good, not to be far from us. For my own part as I am a Christian, and born under the constitution of this State, I must profess and declare, that it is unlawful for any to expect Deliverance (I speak it as to the Oppressed in the chiefest of their

possess-

poſſeſſions, their Conſciences) from any hands whatſoever, but his only, in whoſe are the heart of the King to turn it as the Rivers of Water. The Supream Authority lies in his breaſt, and if we go any way that is not in order to the attaining the ſtamp of his Will, *a le Roy le Veult*, we go out of the way of our Conſtitution, and conſequently againſt the Ordinance of God in our Nation. *Let every ſoul be ſubject to the higher Powers; for there is no Power but of God; and the Powers that be, are ordained of God. Whoſoever therefore reſiſteth the Power, reſiſteth the Ordinance of God; and they that reſiſt, ſhall receive to themſelves Damnation.* But now, if it ſhall pleaſe Almighty,

mighty God to touch that Heart he hath in his hands, the Heart of his *Sacred Majesty*, our Lord and King, with the prevalent sentiments of Clemency and Mercy, of Nobleness and Pitty, of Righteousness and Peace, so as he shall come to see, that this narrow uncatholick spirit, that would have the minds of all persons, of every sect and condition, to be of the size of theirs only, is unbeseeming his Royal Grace and Influence, who is not the Father only of the Circumcised, but of the Uncircumcised also: Then shall the Salvation of God come out of *Zion*, and the Captivity of his People be turned back. Then may those blessed Seeds that were sown in his

his Majeſties wiſe and gracious *Declaration* ſo long ſince, revive, take root and ſpring up. Then may the *Ejected Miniſters*, and other Civil Officers worthy of truſt, that, like the Witneſſes in the *Revelation*, have lain dead for theſe three dayes (a day for a year) and half (καὶ ἡμισυ, not a half, but half three dayes more) by their Civil death (inſomuch as others have come into their places, as dead by the Act) in a Street (ἐπὶ τῆς πλατείας, *a certain Street*) of the *great City*, (The great City, ſayes Mr. *Mede*, is *Rome* with her ten Tributary Kingdoms, whereof *Britain* was one) have a Spirit of Life enter and ſet them on their feet (that is, raiſe them from this condition)

on) and they ascend up in a cloud to Heaven (that is, with remark, to preferment) by the call of a Voice from thence (which can be no other than that of the Supream Magistrate) saying, *Come up hither*.

Pardon the Allusion, which seeing others are, or have been too apt to make use of, to the entertaining such hopes and thoughts that are *perhaps* of dangerous consequence, I would direct unto a Hope that is lawful, if at all there be any: while so many distressed Consciences lie bleeding, and know not whither they are to have recourse for succour. May it therefore please his most excellent Majesty, with the Lords and Gentlemen of both

both Houſes, to take this Motion at their Seſſion into conſideration, that the matter being firſt duely weighed, debated, digeſted, for the agreement of things that ſeem to differ, the difficulties may be cleared, inconveniences prevented, none diſpleaſed: and ſo the *Propoſer* may have pardon, and the *Propoſition* *à ſoit fait comme il e deſirè.*

Give Indulgence (ſtated conſultedly) and you remove Diſcontent. You put an end for ever to Sedition and Rebellion; You root out the ſeeds and foment of them; You take away the very pretence. You prevent the Evil, you encourage the Well-meaning and Good. You will eſtabliſh the Church.

Do

Do all good, No hurt. You will win our hearts; You will unite us at home; and for our Enemies abroad, if they dare, let them come. *Ecce quam bonum & amænum est, habitare Fratres etiàm unà.*

VVhen *Popilius* came from *Rome* to *Antiochus* he declares his meſſage, that the Senate required of him to withdraw his Armies from *Egypt*, for *Ptolomy* was their Friend and Confederate. The King anſwers, he will take reſpite and conſider of it. *Popilius* with the end of his Rod draws a Circle round about him upon the ground, *Before you paſs this Circle* (ſayes he) *reſolve, that I may declare you Friend or Enemy to the* Romans. *Antiochus*, whether

whether daunted at their known Power, or affected with the Bravery; or whether (as is not unlikely) out of the *Native goodneſs* that accompanies Princes, which makes them receive ſuch unexpected Actions with grace, candour and generoſity, he ſeeing indeed it was beſt for him; anſwered immediatly, *He would do as the Romans would have him.*

Great Sirs! I am come to You this day from an Authority *more* mighty than the Senate of *Rome*, in the Name of the Lord of Hoſts, the God of *Iſrael*. There are a People you proſecute in your Acts, that make conſcience of their wayes, and live peaceably. Withdraw this Hoſtility of yours; for they ſerve God,

and

and are his Confederates, as well as you, or others; and he will bless those that bless such, and be an Enemy to their Enemies. Thus saith the Lord, *Be merciful as your Father in heaven is merciful.* Before you pass over these few Lines that are left, Resolve, whether you will be like him, or like him not? Resolve, that I may declare you to be his Sons; and him no Enemy, but a Friend, to our Sovereign, and to his People. *And it came to pass as he was speaking, Amaziah said unto him, Art thou made of the Kings Counsel? Forbear, why shouldest thou be smitten? Then the Prophet forbare.*

June the 18th. 1667.

FINIS.

Reader, By reaſon of the Author's abſence from the Preſs, theſe faults have eſcaped, which thou art deſired thus to amend with thy Pen.

Page 6. line 3. for *we*, read *you*. p. 10 l. 2. f. *theſe*, r. *thoſe*. & l. 4. f. *thoſe* r. *their*. p. 11. l. 10. f. *viros* r. *vicos*. p. 17. l. 2. f. *ni* r. *in*. p. 25. l. 18. f. *Veſtitum* r. *Vetitum*. p. 35. l. 7. f. *where* r. *when*. p. 53. l. 15. f. *Namquid*, r. *Nam quod*. & l. 17. f. *ſultæ* r. *ſulta*. p. 57. l. 17. f. *amo-ares* r. *amours*. p. 62. l. 7. f. *Cauſes* r. *Cauſe*.